

Message Text

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AMCONSUL HONG KONG IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY KABUL IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL KARACHI IMMEDIATE
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AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TOKYO IMMEDIATE
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON IMMEDIATE
CINCEUR IMMEDIATE
CINCLANT IMMEDIATE
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI IMMEDIATE
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BEIRUT ALSO PASS BAGHDAD; KUWAIT ALSO PASS DOHA;

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: MPOL, MARR, PARM, UK, IO

SUBJECT: BRITISH APPROVAL OF US DIEGO GARCIA PLANS

REFS: (A) STATE 22251, 5 FEB 74; (B) STATE 24667, 6 FEB 74; (C) LONDON 1553, 2 FEB 74 (NOTAL).

MILITARY ADDEES ALSO FOR POLAD

1. AT 1000 WASHINGTON TIME ON DECEMBER 3, THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WILL REPORT TO PARLIAMENT THE RESULTS OF HMG'S DEFENSE REVIEW. INCLUDED IN THE STATEMENT TO BE MADE AT THAT TIME WILL BE ANNOUNCEMENT: (A) OF FORMAL BRITISH APPROVAL OF OUR PLANS FOR UPGRADING OUR FACILITIES AT DIEGO GARCIA; AND, (B) OF THE PROPOSED US-UK CONSULTATIONS ON POSSIBILITIES FOR ARMS RESTRAINT IN THE INDIAN OCEAN AREA.

2. AGREED US-UK PRESS GUIDANCE ON DIEGO GARCIA--ON AN IF-ASKED BASIS--REMAINS AS TRANSMITTED IN REF (A), WITH THE FOLLOWING CHANGES RESULTING FROM SUBSEQUENT AMENDMENT AND UPDATING (NUMBERS REFER TO PARAGRAPHING OF REF (A)):

--2. Q: WHY ARE WE EXPANDING OUR FACILITIES ON DIEGO GARCIA? -

--A: SECRETARY OF DEFENSE SCHLESINGER A YEAR AGO

ANNOUNCED THAT THE U.S. WAS RETURNING TO A POLICY OF MORE FREQUENT DEPLOYMENTS OF OUR FORCES TO THE INDIAN OCEAN. WE INTEND TO CONTINUE TO MAINTAIN AN AUGMENTED PRESENCE IN THAT AREA MORE FREQUENTLY THAN IN THE PAST. DEPLOYMENTS IN THE INDIAN OCEAN ARE FAR REMOVED FROM NORMAL U.S. NAVAL SUPPORT FACILITIES IN THE PACIFIC. WE FEEL IT IS DESIRABLE FROM BOTH AN ECONOMIC AND OPERATIONAL PERSPECTIVE TO MAKE AVAILABLE TO OUR FORCES IN THE AREA A SAFE AND DEPENDABLE HAVEN WHICH CAN PROVIDE EMERGENCY REPAIRS, SUPPLIES, AND FUEL WITHIN
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CONVENIENT OPERATING RANGE.

--12. Q: WHY DOESN'T THE UK MAKE A GREATER CONTRIBUTION, IF THIS IS A COOPERATIVE DEFENSE EFFORT?

--A: THE UK HAS MADE A SUBSTANTIAL CONTRIBUTION BY PROVIDING THE REAL ESTATE REQUIRED FOR THE INSTALLATION ON DIEGO GARCIA.

--13. Q: WILL THE UK SERVICES ALSO INCREASE THEIR USE OF THE ISLAND?

--A: THE AGREEMENT WOULD PERMIT THIS.

--32. Q: WHEN WILL THE PROGRAMMED EXPANSION BE COMPLETED?

--A: PROBABLY BY 1977 OR 1978.

--33. Q: WHAT WILL BE THE TOTAL COST OF THE FACILITY AS PRESENTLY ENVISIONED?

--A: APPROXIMATELY 35.5 MILLION (1974) DOLLARS FOR THE EXPANSION.

3. IN ADDITION, WHILE WE AND THE BRITISH HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO AGREE ON PRECISE WORDING FOR PRESS GUIDANCE REGARDING REFERENCE TO JOINT CONSULTATIONS ON ARMS RESTRAINTS IN THE INDIAN OCEAN AREA, THE BRITISH HAVE SEEN AND HAVE NO OBJECTION TO OUR USE OF THE FOLLOWING Q'S AND A'S ON THAT SUBJECT; BRITISH GUIDANCE ON THIS POINT IS MAINLY AN INJUNCTION TO POSTS NOT TO BE DRAWN OUT ON SPECULATIVE DETAILS OF TOPICS ABOUT WHICH US AND UK WILL CONSULT, AND OUR GUIDANCE HAS THE SAME INTENTION-

-- Q: WHAT TYPE OF ARMS RESTRAINT MEASURES IN THE INDIAN OCEAN AREA DO YOU CONTEMPLATE DISCUSSING WITH THE UK GOVERNMENT?

-- A: OBVIOUSLY, IT IS DIFFICULT TO REPLY DEFINITELY IN ADVANCE OF THE CONSULTATIONS. THERE ARE NUMEROUS, COMPLEX AND SENSITIVE POLITICAL AND TECHNICAL QUESTIONS INVOLVED. THEREFORE, WE WOULD EXPECT TO CANVASS A BROAD RANGE OF POSSIBILITIES IN SEEKING TO DETERMINE
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WHAT APPROACHES, IF ANY, MIGHT HAVE MERIT.

-- Q: WOULD YOU EXPECT TO EXPLORE THE AUSTRALIAN PROPOSAL THAT THE US AND SOVIET UNION DISCUSS MUTUAL RESTRAINT IN THESE CONSULTATIONS?

-- A: IN ADVANCE OF A DETAILED EXAMINATION OF THE PROBLEM, I WOULD NOT WISH TO COMMENT ON SPECIFIC POSSIBILITIES.

4. FOR COLOMBO AND NEW DELHI: WORKING IN CLOSE CONCERT WITH YOUR BRITISH COLLEAGUES, YOU MAY AT YOUR DISCRETION FOLLOW UP AT APPROPRIATE LEVELS WITH HOST GOVERNMENTS SHORTLY AFTER UK APPROACHES (BUT NOT BEFORE PARLIAMENTARY STATEMENT IS MADE). YOU MAY WISH TO NOTE THAT DESPITE OUR FRANK DIFFERENCE OF VIEWS ON THIS SUBJECT, WE ARE PLEASED GSL AND GOI HAVE KEPT IT IN REALISTIC PERSPECTIVE AND HOPE THIS WILL CONTINUE, FOR WE SEE NO REASON WHY IT SHOULD AFFECT OUR GOOD BILATERAL RELATIONS.

5. POSTS ARE URGED TO REPORT REACTIONS IF ANY. KISSINGER

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